

WTG-TV and various
other stations

Jan. 21, 1962

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Mark Evans
Martin Weldon

PROGRAM Opinion in the Capital

STATION WTG-TV and various
other stations

DATE January 21, 1961 7:30 P.M.

CITY Washington, D. C.

REMARKS OF MR. PEARSON

MR. DREW PEARSON WAS SEEN ON THE TV SCREEN AS
HE WAS INTERVIEWED BY MARK EVANS AND MARTIN WELDON.

EVANS: "Drew, I've had the feeling things have been entirely too quiet as far as you are concerned for too long with the Kennedy administration, and now it seems as though you've unleashed some pretty powerful guns. I know Martin is ready to fire one at you, so go right ahead."

PEARSON: "Things are pepping up."

WELDON: "Well, I thought, Drew.../discussion of Senator Byrd and Dupont-General Motors stock disposal/"

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EVANS: "Drew, on that same subject--or on another subject, I should say, you have taken some pretty hefty swings at a very important Kennedy appointee, probably as important a job as there is in the land, the head of the CIA, Mr. McCone. It looks as though he may pass in spite of it."

PEARSON: "Oh, he's going to pass, he's going to be nominated--he's going to be confirmed; I knew that at the start. But just the same I think it's very important when any man is up for a very important office that the public has a chance to look at him. I think it's the obligation of the press to report the facts on him, and of the Senators to examine them further. Well, the Senate did yesterday--the Senate Armed Services Committee did scrutinize him rather carefully, not as carefully as perhaps they should, but some members, mainly Mrs. Smith of Maine, Senator Case of South Dakota, are asking a lot of questions which I think are very healthy."

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EVANS: "Do you feel?--I think you've been rather kind to the Kennedy administration thus far although I think you do that pretty much with all administrations until you start finding what you think are weaknesses. Do you feel this is a real mistake on the part of Mr. Kennedy?"

PEARSON: "Yes, I do. I think this is a serious mistake. McCone has no background (there?)--he doesn't know anything about espionage problems, intelligence--"

EVANS: "Who does?"

PEARSON: "Well, a lot of people do. Allen Dulles certainly had a long background in it, and a lot of people from the State Department do, and this man has been a very successful businessman and all the records show that he's made a lot of money at government expense. It's all spelled out in past hearings before various committees, and why should he be head of an agency which has the power of life and death in making recommendations in certain parts of the world, especially in the Near East, where (?) is affected and where he owns--is the second biggest stockholder in Standard Oil of California and a big stockholder in Standard of New Jersey, which control the Arabian-American Oil Company." //

WELDON: "Drew, the other day there's, I think, a Newsweek story which told about the columnists here in Washington most popular and influential with President Kennedy. Apparently the President reads regularly Lippman and Alsop and Reston and you, I think. Do you know how well you stand with the administration? To what extent do you think you influence the congressional and presidential actions?"

PEARSON: "Well, that's a very leading question that I shouldn't answer."

WELDON: "Well, you have some idea."

EVANS: "Have you any indication in regard to the McCone story? The President must have read that--have you heard anything from it?"

PEARSON: "McCone offered to resign the other day--"

EVANS: "As a result of the column?"

PEARSON: "Yeah, the President said not to resign, so I have no influence with the President."

WELDON: "But you do have entre, don't you?"

PEARSON: "Oh, yes. I had a very nice visit with the President last Saturday."

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PEARSON: "I pinpoint my shots very carefully. Anybody who reads the column--take, for instance, on McCone, will see that I spent weeks digging into the records, naming dates, amounts, everything that he's done. That took an awful lot of work."